Measures to improve tourism in the country

2027. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conclave of CEOs of tourism organisation has recently recommended various measures to improve tourism in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A number of recommendations were made in the Conference and at the CEOs Conclave organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in November, 2004 which *inter alia* included: building world class infrastructure including hotel accommodation; inclusion of tourism in the curriculum of schools and colleges; building tourism hubs around pilgrimage centers; single point collection of taxes for an entire circuit; setting up of Statutory Heritage Commission for laying down policies, identifying all heritage areas and aiming for heritage friendly development; placing tourism in the Concurrent List of Constitution; developing river cruises, marketing health tourism; etc.

Creation of tourism hub in Tamil Nadu

2028. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to create a tourism hub in Tamil Nadu-Kerala connecting Kodaikanal, Vaigai Dam, Suruli-falls, Thekkadi, Kannagi Temple and Sabarimala to attract more tourists in these areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI MATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) There is no such plan with a Ministry of Tourism to create a tourism hub in Tamil Nadu-Kerala. However, the development and promotion of places of tourist interest/spots is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations concerned. The Ministry of Tourism provides funds for development of different

tourist places on the basis of field visits/consultations with the States/UT Administrations concerned and on receipt of project proposals from them, complete in all respect, as per guidelines. No project proposal has been received from the State Governments of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in this regard.

Sale of Kovalam Ashok Beach Resort

2029. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India Tourism Development Corporation's Kovalam Ashok Beach Resort has been taken over by a private hotel group during March, 2003 as a part of the privatisation;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof including the cost given to ITDC and the land transferred to the private party;

(c) the details of land under the possession of ITDC as per the possession certificate after 1971, the land taken over by Government from the private party during the year 2004; and

(d) whether Government propose to initiate any inquiry on the privatisation of ITDCs Kovalam hotel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) As per the disinvestment policy of the Government, Kovalam Ashok Beach Resort was sold to M/s M. Far Hotels Ltd, Cochin on 11th July, 2002 for Rs. 43,68,76,000/-.

(c) The details relating to area of land/property title etc. of Kovalam Ashok Beach Resort as indicated in the Share purchase Agreement are given in the Statement. *(See below).* Government of India has not taken over any land from the private party during the year 2004.

(d) The matter is *sub-judice* as a case is pending in Kerala High Court.